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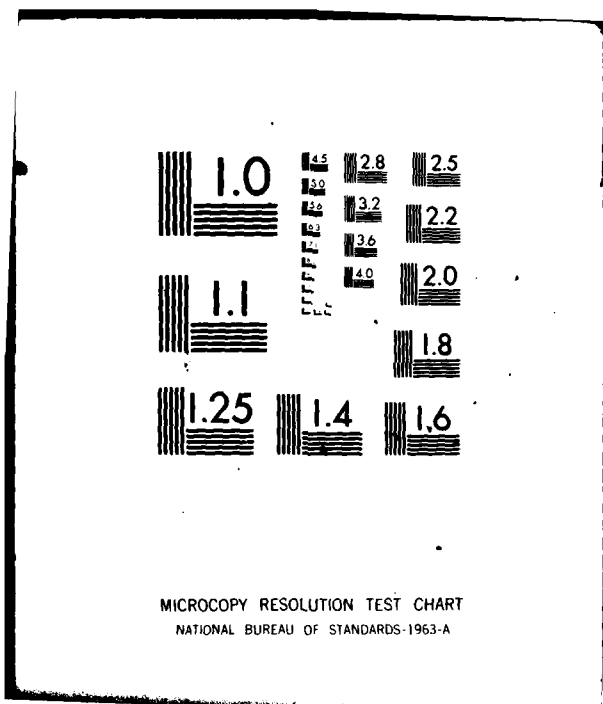
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U.S. ARMY COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF COLLEGE

ASSIGNMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES OF THE AIR FORCE  
MANPOWER AND PERSONNEL CENTER PALACE SCOPE PROGRAM

By

David Pedersen, Major, USAF

A RESEARCH STUDY SUBMITTED TO THE AIR FORCE FACULTY

May 1980

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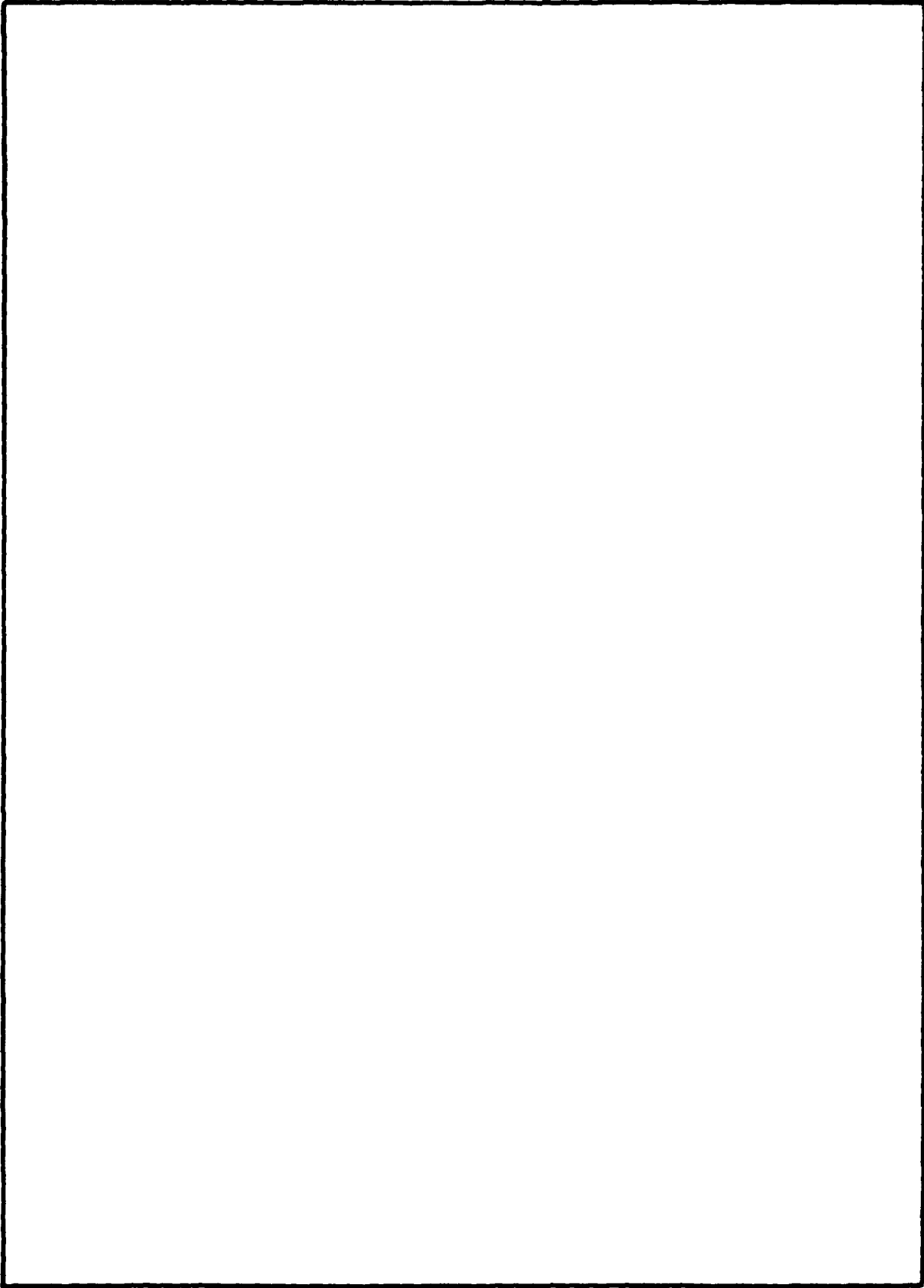
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# ABSTRACT

The management of assignment actions for Air Force officers has undergone significant changes over the years. This study examines the assignment management policies of the Air Force Manpower and Personnel Center Palace Scope Team, which manages assignments for the Weapons Director career field, Air Force Specialty Code 17XX. The study addresses the organization of the Palace Scope Team, current career field management, changing conditions within the field, and anticipated problems in assignment management of Weapons Directors.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT. . . . .	ii
PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND . . . . .	iii
LIST OF TABLES. . . . .	v
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY . . . . .	vi
 Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
Statement of the Problem	
Objectives	
Limitation of the Study	
Organization of the Study	
Background	
II. THE PALACE SCOPE PROGRAM . . . . .	7
Concept	
Goals	
Policies and Guidance for the Program	
Palace Scope Office Organization	
III. ASSIGNMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES/PROCEDURES . .	12
Types of Assignments Available	
Routine Assignment Considerations	
Special Assignment Considerations	
Effect of the Rated Supplement	
Effect of the Enlisted Controller Program	
IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS . . . . .	23
Conclusions	
Recommendations	
BIBLIOGRAPHY. . . . .	29



## LIST OF TABLES

	Page
I. Controller Authorization Distribution	12
II. Controller Allocations by MAJCOM	13

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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**TITLE:** ASSIGNMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES OF THE AIR FORCE MAN-POWER AND PERSONNEL CENTER PALACE SCOPE PROGRAM

**AUTHOR:** MAJOR DAVID D PEDERSEN

**ADVISOR:** COL NATHAN GOLDBERG SENIOR AIR FORCE REPRESENTATIVE/U.S. ARMY COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF COLLEGE

I. Purpose: To determine if the assignment management policies of the Palace Scope Program result in the effective management of the Weapons Director resource, Air Force Specialty Code 17XX.

II. Problem: Can the Weapons Director career field be effectively managed in light of the transition it is presently undergoing? From its inception, the Weapons Director field, commonly referred to as the controller field, has been a dynamic specialty. The field has undergone many changes in size, structure, and importance. In the recent past many changes were made which enhanced the image, importance, and career development opportunities of controllers. Because of the

changing complexion of the controller field, those gains are seriously threatened and the ability of the Palace Scope Team to effectively manage the 17XX resource is gravely jeopardized. Constraints imposed by law and policy are causing, or will cause, great difficulties in resource management and could ultimately result in severe retention problems.

III. Conclusions: Within the context of the evolution of the career field and the constraints effecting the assignments of female controllers, the Palace Scope Team is providing very effective management of the 17XX resource.

Because of systemic, rather than personnel, problems, the ability of the Palace Scope Team to continue that effective management is in doubt. If decisions regarding the problems of system manning priorities, female controller assignment policies, Continental United States (CONUS) to overseas assignment ratios, controller retention, and Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) manning are not made soon, controller motivation, management and retention will become serious problems. Those decisions will have to be made at the Department of Defense/Headquarters Air Force and Congressional levels.

IV. Recommendations: Some possible solutions to current and projected problems include establishment of a prioritized manning list by control system and/or command; removal of constraints for female controller assignments or closure of the field to women; expansion of the career field base and

increased utilization of officers with prior controller experience; enhancement of career opportunities for middle and upper level managers within the field; and the creation of a pay incentive program for flying duty performance.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

With the increased demand for efficiency and effective management of resources, both material and personnel, it is very important that the provisions of Air Force Manpower and Personnel Center (AFMPC) assignment procedures and policies be used to place personnel in the proper job at the proper time. There are two important aspects to this, (1) that the mission be accomplished, and (2) that the Air Force member be given assignments that are challenging, rewarding, and offer him timely, logical progression in terms of increased responsibility. The purpose of this paper is to analyze the effectiveness of assignment management accomplished through the AFMPC Palace Scope Program, the program developed to manage assignment actions and policies effecting Weapons Directors.

#### Objectives of the Study

The primary objectives of the study are to (1) analyze the structure of the Palace Scope Program, (2) investigate the assignment policies and procedures used in the Palace Scope Program, and (3) draw conclusions and make recommendations for improvement of the program.

### Limitation of the Study

This study will be concerned with assignment policies for the management of personnel in the Weapons Director Air Force Specialty Code, AFSC 17XX.

### Organization of the Study

The study will be organized into four chapters. Chapter I will delineate the problem being analyzed, define the objectives of the study, explain the limited scope of the analysis and the organization of the research paper, and give some background information on the Weapons Director career field. Chapter II will explain the concept behind the Palace Scope Program, examine its goals, and explain the organization of the Palace Scope office. Chapter III will contain an explanation of the assignment management considerations used in filling the various Weapons Director positions throughout the Air Force. The discussion will cover considerations for filling both routine and special (Air Staff, joint, exchange) assignment positions. The chapter will also contain discussion of two subjects which have affected the Weapons Director career field: (1) the rated supplement program, and (2) the Enlisted Controller Program. The final chapter, Chapter IV, will contain the conclusions reached regarding the effectiveness of assignment management policies used in the Palace Scope Program. It will also contain my recommendations for improvement of the program and enhancement of its effectiveness.

### Background Information

The Weapons Director career field, AFSC 17XX, was once a very large career field, but the number of controllers diminished for several years after the Vietnam war. Personnel assigned in this field, frequently called controllers or weapons controllers, have served throughout the world where air defense operations were conducted and where monitoring tactical air operations was a major facet of their activity. Frequently, controller duty locations are in isolated areas, even within the continental United States.

In the early 1950s the controller career field was very large. The primary threat to the United States came from the Soviet Union's long range bomber force. Manning the extensive radar network established to detect, identify, and, when necessary, provide directions to intercept and destroy that threat, required many highly qualified controllers. The early 1950s saw an air defense system which consisted of several hundred radar sites, each of which had its own area of responsibility, and each of which had its own compliment of controllers.

In addition to the controllers in the air defense system, there were others assigned to tactical radar units of the Tactical Air Command and to Aircraft Control and Warning (AC&W) sites overseas. In all there were several thousand controllers within the Air Force.

In 1957 the Semi-automatic Ground Environment System,

SAGE, became operational. The SAGE system brought computer technology into the air defense equation and permitted the electronic linkage of several radar sites to one large command and control center. Radar inputs from individual radar sites were transmitted to a central control facility where a single video display showed the air defense picture for the combined areas of coverage of each individual radar site. A SAGE sector normally received inputs from ten radar sites simultaneously.

The advent of the automated control system meant that the span of control within the air defense system could be drastically reduced. Therefore, the controller positions were consolidated at the SAGE Direction Centers (DC) with some being left at selected radar sites to provide a backup control capability in the event the automated system failed. Movement of the controllers to the DCs permitted a considerable reduction in the number of controllers required for manning the air defense system. Despite the fact that requirements for controllers increased somewhat in overseas areas, the overall trend in the number of controllers required in the late 1950s and early 1960s showed a decline.

In the mid-1960s U.S. involvement in Vietnam increased. Continued expansion of the use of air power in Vietnam required more radar control personnel to handle the load, and the number of controllers reached 2700 in 1969.

Following the Vietnam war, the requirement for control-



lers decreased drastically in the Southeast Asian theater. In Korea and Japan, controller requirements were reduced as radar site operations were transferred to Korean and Japanese control.

In the mid to late 1970s, the number of weapons controllers had dropped from 2700 to approximately 1400. With the integration of the Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft into the Air Force inventory and the expansion of the European Tactical Air Control System (TACS), however, the need for controllers is once again increasing. In fact, the projected requirement for 1983 is 2100 controllers.

During the 1950s and early 1960s, there was little real management of controller resources. The frequency of remote tours (three to four in a 20 year career) and isolated locations of even the stateside sites, made the career field one of the least desired in the Air Force. That, coupled with low promotion percentages and relatively low Officer Effectiveness Report indices, caused severe morale and retention problems.

With the advent of the Palace Scope Program, there has been improvement in the status of the career field and in one's prospects for career development and progression. Better management of assignments and a reduction in the number of overseas sites have cut the number of remote tours

to an average of two per 20 year career. The percentage of promotions has improved and more command positions are being filled by weapons controllers.

Clearly the establishment of the Palace Scope Program resulted in improvements in the 17XX career field. In the following chapters I will examine the effectiveness of the program and, where deemed necessary, make recommendations for improvement.

## CHAPTER II

### THE PALACE SCOPE PROGRAM

#### Concept

Prior to 1970, officer assignment actions at Air Force level were made by personnel specialists assigned to the Air Force Military Personnel Center, now the Air Force Manpower and Personnel Center. Although they were experts in the technicalities of personnel policies and procedures, they were not well versed in the variety of functions performed by the officers within the AFSCs they managed. This lack of knowledge of specific career field requirements frequently led to poor utilization of personnel based on such factors as educational background, experience, and specialized training. As might be expected, the officer corps wondered if there was any "method to the madness" of MPC's assignment actions. The seeming lack of direction in assignment policies made career planning difficult and adversely affected the morale of many officers.

In 1970 Lt General Robert Dixon was named Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel. Recognizing the credibility problem that faced the personnel assignment system, Gen. Dixon implemented the Palace mode of personnel

management, out of which came the Palace Scope Program. Under the new concept, officers from each major AFSC category were assigned to the Personnel Center to manage the resources and make assignment actions within their particular AFSC. In the case of Palace Scope, this meant that qualified Weapons Directors, who were knowledgeable in a variety of jobs within the field and familiar with the type of background which would be best suited for filling a particular position, were now making assignments.

The advantages of such a system are obvious. Functional managers were now able to look at an officer's record and career development objectives and make assignment decisions which effectively utilized the individual's skills while simultaneously filling mission requirements. The system also gave the officer in the field the feeling that he or she had someone they could talk to, someone to whom they were a name--not just a number or another "body". The ability of functional managers to speak the jargon of the officer in the field, to understand his career progression objectives, and to give sound advice when requested did much to close the credibility gap which existed between the Personnel Center and the individual officer.

#### Goal of the Program

The objective of the Palace Scope Program is simple--to effectively manage the Weapons Controller resource to accomplish the assigned mission worldwide and at the same time

permit personal growth and career progression for the individual controllers. An additional aspect of this objective is to enhance, wherever possible, the career field by making recommendations and implementing programs which improve the chances for controllers to fill meaningful, career enhancing positions. That objective is easily stated but its fulfillment does present some problems in personnel management which will be discussed in a later chapter of this paper.

#### Policies and Guidance for the Program

The mechanics of assignment policies and procedures and the blueprint for the career development of Weapons Controllers, as they are for all AFSCs, are found in Air Force Regulation 36-20, Officer Assignments, and Air Force Regulation 36-23, Officer Career Development, respectively. Palace Scope staff members manage the controller resource within the parameters of those directives with no special guidance from above.

#### Palace Scope Office Organization

The Palace Scope personnel organization consists of four officers (one major, two captains, one first lieutenant-authorized) and one enlisted personnel technician. The officers serve a four year controlled tour which permits them time to learn the technical aspects of their personnel management/assignment activities and also provides the continuity needed in the office. Their backgrounds within the

controller field are screened to insure that their combined experience is representative of as much of the career field as possible.

As presently organized, each officer is responsible for making assignments to specific Air Force major commands and/or joint or departmental agencies. One officer handles assignments to Pacific Air Forces (PACAF), Alaskan Air Command (AAC), North American Air Defense Command (NORAD), and Air Defense, Tactical Air Command (ADTAC). Another officer handles assignments, with the exception of ADTAC assignments, to the Tactical Air Command (TAC). A third officer makes all assignments to United States Air Forces Europe (USAFE). The fourth officer makes assignments to the joint commands, departmental agencies, Air Training Command (ATC), Air Force Systems Command (AFSC), Air Force Communication Service (AFCS), and the Electronic Security Command (ESC).

To insure that all four officers remain aware of what each of the others is doing, they meet as a group to give consensus approval of each controller assignment which is made. That procedure keeps each assignment officer familiar with the names of controllers in the field, and permits them to maintain continuity of assignment processing when any of the other officers is on leave or extended temporary duty.

The Palace Scope staff handles assignments of personnel, second lieutenant through lieutenant colonel, from three sources. The majority of their activity involves personnel

with a primary AFSC of 17XX. A second source is the input from the rated supplement. The final category of people for whom they complete assignment actions is that group which has a secondary AFSC of 17XX and which is being cycled out of its primary specialty for a tour as a controller. Controller assignments for colonels are not handled by Palace Scope personnel but are made by the Colonels Group within AFMPC.

### CHAPTER III

#### ASSIGNMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES/PROCEDURES

##### Types of Assignments Available

Weapons Director allocations can be found at all echelons of command-from tactical air control flights all the way to Air Staff positions. The majority of authorizations are still at the squadron/flight level, but the number of staff positions available to controllers is increasing. Table 1 indicates the percentages of controllers assigned at each level of command. (1,4)

Table 1. Controller Authorization Distribution

<u>Level</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Squadron/Flight	70
Numbered Air Force/Division	17
MAJCOM/Special Operating Agencies	10
Joint/Departmental	3

Allocations are distributed throughout the operational major commands (MAJCOM) and involve duty locations worldwide. A distribution of allocations by MAJCOMs is shown in Table 2. As of March 1979, 69 percent of the controller allocations were in the Continental United States (CONUS), 21 percent were in overseas long tour areas, nine percent were in overseas short tour areas, and one percent was in areas where the individual had the option of making the tour long or short. (1,4)



Table 2. Controller Allocations by MAJCOM

<u>MAJCOM/AGENCY</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
TAC	61
ADC (Aerospace Defense Center)	5
USAFE	15
PACAF	7
AAC	5
ATC	3
Joint/Departmental	3
AFSC	1

Duty positions manned by controllers include radar controller, command and control, MAJCOM staff, instructor, exchange officer, and Air Staff positions.

#### Routine Assignment Procedures

My discussion of routine assignment procedures will focus on the considerations behind assignment actions rather than on the detailed mechanics of the assignment process described in Air Force Regulation 36-20. These considerations include the 17XX Personnel Resource Management Plan, the shortage of middle management level personnel, the management of women in the speciality, and the changing complexion of the career field.

The 17XX Personnel Resource Management Plan was developed in an effort to correct problems such as career field turbulence, poor training programs, and a lack of career broadening opportunity. Although improved training has not, in and of itself, resulted in more stable tours for controllers, the emphasis placed on training in the specific system to which he/she will be assigned did improve utility value

to the unit. When controllers were given only a basic controller course then sent to a unit for on-the-job training in their specific control system, it was not unusual for the cycle to take five to eight months. During that period, the training controller was of no operational value to the unit. Under the Management Plan, the formal school structure was revised and students were trained in the specific system to which they would be assigned. With this approach most controllers required only four to six weeks to become operationally ready and operationally useful to their unit.

A second aspect of the Management Plan was to increase the number of accessions into the career field. This served two purposes, (1) to increase stability, and (2) to start building a larger controller force to meet the projected requirements for the 1983 time frame. By increasing the number of accessions, individual controllers were less vulnerable for frequent permanent changes of station (PCS). That fact, combined with the reduction in short tour locations/authorizations, has increased the average time on station for lieutenants from 12 months in Fiscal Year (FY) 1977 to 24 months in FY 1979 before they were assigned involuntarily to short tours overseas. The projected time on station for FY 1979 accessions to the field is 34 months. This increased stability improved morale within the specialty and greatly reduced the resource management problems faced by the Palace Scope personnel. Regarding retention in the field, increased accessions resulted in increased retention.

Regarding the short tour assignment policy, the goal is no more than two in twenty years. The first will normally be served either the first or last year of the officer's initial four-year service commitment. The second will be delayed, whenever possible, until the officer reaches field grade.

Another benefit of increased accessions is the building of a 17XX "supplement". Even with an increasing number of controllers completing their directed duty assignments and retraining into other career fields, the Palace Scope managers will have a larger number of people to work with in their resource management planning. That "supplement", though small now, is proving to be very important in filling middle management level allocations. In FY 1979, 30 prior 17XX middle management officers were returned to the career field. Additionally, 70 middle management captains were retrained into the specialty from other AFSCs under the Support Distribution and Training Management Program. The goal of this increased qualification of 17XXs is to input and train enough controllers to handle increased projected requirements without having to rely on a crash training effort at the time the projected requirements become firm authorizations.

A factor which played an important part in Palace Scope resource management was the entry of women into the field beginning in 1974. As of January 1980, 222 women had become controllers and the projection for 1983 is 350. (2) Although women are capable of performing controller duties,

restrictions imposed by federal law and by facility limitations close 44 percent of the available jobs to women controllers. Laws which prevent women from serving in combat-related duties have made it necessary to restrict women from serving in the AWACS aircraft, the Airborne Battlefield Command and Control Center (ABCCC) program, Forward Air Control Posts (FACP) within the tactical control system, and at Control and Reporting Centers/Control and Reporting Posts (CRC/CRP) in Korea. Facility limitations at some locations in Alaska and Iceland also force a current restriction on the assignment of women to those locations.

The resource management problem created by the entry of females to the field is two-fold. The first problem area centers around the fact that assignment restrictions for women result in their assignment primarily to fixed systems while men will be assigned mainly to the mobile, high-TDY systems. This will both reduce management flexibility for Palace Scope personnel and increase the vulnerability of men for assignment to several of the less desirable duty locations found in the field. The second aspect of the problem involves the reduction in experience and career progression opportunities available to women controllers. Although the career field will remain open to women, Palace Scope managers will have to make clear the possible limitation of career opportunities caused by current assignment restrictions and perhaps offer women greater opportunity

to change fields than they can offer male controllers. Greater retraining opportunities for women than men could cause problems in retention of male controllers and further complicate 17XX resource management.

Having looked at the resource management effects of the 17XX Personnel Resource Management Plan, the shortage of middle management personnel, and the entry of women into the 17XX field, I will turn my attention to the final major area of consideration--the changing complexion of the career field. The primary areas of concern will be the change in mission orientation, the problems created by increased airborne operations, and the dramatic affect those two factors will have on the CONUS to overseas assignment ratio.

As the threat of attack on the United States changed from a bomber oriented to a missile oriented force, and the threat of nuclear war changed to that of a conventional conflict in overseas areas, the mission orientation within the Weapons Director field changed. The controller field is no longer heavily oriented toward air defense. The emphasis is now on highly mobile tactical units which can be rapidly deployed to combat or potential combat areas. That change is reflected in the fact that air defense controller allocations will drop from 500 to 200 in the next few years, and an increase in tactical controller requirements will occur because of the expansion of the tactical control system in Europe.

The dramatic increase in airborne control operations brought about by the integration of AWACS into the defense system will cause some problems in the management of the 17XX career field. By 1981 TAC will require 450 controllers to man the U.S. AWACS program and by 1983, an additional 100 controllers will be required to fulfill American commitments for manning the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) AWACS system. With the reduction of air defense controller allocations and the increase of accessions to the field, this might not sound like much of a problem. However, two factors complicate the issue; (1) controllers assigned to flying duty in the ABCCC or AWACS must be volunteers, and (2) as of now, women are prohibited from serving in both of these systems. Palace Scope personnel, therefore, will have to closely monitor the flow of personnel into and out of airborne systems. Only the future will tell if sufficient numbers of controllers will volunteer for flying duty or whether Congress will change the law (forbidding women in combat-related duties) which results in the restriction of female controllers from flying duty. For the short term at least, increased flying operations will be an area of major concern for resource managers.

The number of controllers assigned in the United States versus the number assigned overseas is referred to as the CONUS to overseas ratio. The two factors discussed above, expansion of the tactical control system overseas and the

increase in flying operations, have a dramatic impact on that ratio. The changing CONUS to overseas ratio will require increased management attention by Palace Scope personnel and could very likely cause some problems in the 17XX specialty in the not too distant future.

The CONUS to overseas ratio for all Air Force line officers is much higher than the ratio for Weapons Controllers. Air Force wide, the CONUS to overseas ratio is 5:1 while for the 17XX field it is presently 2.16:1. (2) That means that controllers, at this point in time, face more than twice the chance of being assigned overseas than do other Air Force line officers. If controllers in the AWACS system are excluded from consideration because they are on a stabilized four-year tour, the controller field ratio drops to 1.7:1 and is projected to drop to 1.4:1 by 1983. (2) This means that non-AWACS controllers face a projected 30 months time on station between overseas assignments and, theoretically at least, every other assignment will be an overseas tour. At a time when great improvement in the image, visibility, and morale of controllers has occurred, this projection of CONUS to overseas assignment ratios looms as a real problem for morale and retention within the controller specialty and will present challenges for resource managers.

#### Special Assignment Procedures

Special assignments available to 17XX personnel include positions on the Air Staff, in joint commands, at the depart-

mental level, and in foreign country exchange programs. The personnel records of candidates for special assignments are thoroughly screened and must indicate both outstanding past performance and a potential for growth. Some problems do exist at this time and are projected to grow in the next few years.

One of these problems is related to the entry of women to the career field. Current restrictions which limit job opportunities to women in the specialty will mean that their records will not be competitive with those of their male counterparts, and their opportunities for selection to special assignments will be adversely effected. For instance, there is a growing trend to require 17XX staff officers at Air Staff and major command levels to have AWACS experience. That requirement will automatically eliminate women from consideration.

A second problem area, or potential problem area, is that most special assignments include specified tour lengths, frequently four-years. With projected time on station reductions to 30 months for non-AWACS controllers, assignment to those long tours will decrease the number of controllers available for overseas positions and further compound the problem of an unacceptable CONUS to overseas ratio.

A number of other routine assignment action requirements, such as time on station, overseas assignment vulnerability, and fulfillment of position requirements, all effect the



consideration of candidates for special category assignments and complicate the job of controller resource management.

#### Effect of the Rated Supplement

An Air Force program which greatly effected the 17XX career field at one time was the rated supplement program, a program which provided both a means for overcoming assignment problems created by an excess of rated officers and a vehicle through which rated personnel could broaden their careers. At its peak in 1977, there were 300 rated supplement personnel in the controller specialty. However, because of the recent shortage of rated personnel, that number is projected to drop to only 12 by late 1980.

The presence of a large number of rated personnel in the controller specialty had both advantages and disadvantages. First, the addition of 300 controllers decreased the number of short overseas tours faced by the career 17XX. Second, both pilots and controllers gained greater appreciation for the responsibilities and problems of the other officer. Third, Palace Scope managers had a larger pool of people with which to fill controller positions. The major disadvantage, however, was that many of the field grade rated officers were assigned to the operations officer and commander positions. That fact did not sit well with field grade career controllers who felt that they had worked their way up in the system and were entitled to those positions of increased responsibility and visibility.

The drastic reduction in rated supplement personnel has virtually removed that program from having any special effect on 17XX resource management. The loss of approximately 290 supplement personnel has only accentuated the need for increased accessions to the field and efficient management of available resources.

#### Effects of the Enlisted Controller Program

Like the rated supplement program, the Enlisted Controller Program, implemented in 1976, was used to offset the shortage of controllers available in the Air Force. Under the program, highly qualified Intercept Control Technicians were authorized to qualify as weapons controllers and control aircraft within the Aerospace Defense Command's (ADCOM) air defense system.

The program, which was limited to ADCOM units, was not a large program in actual numbers. There were only 72 enlisted controllers and their presence in the system did not effect the management of the 17XX resource by the Palace Scope team. Although the program still exists, it will be eliminated as air defense allocations are reduced during the transition from the SAGE air defense system to the new Region Operations Control Center (ROCC) system.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Conclusions

In view of the changes taking place in the Weapons Director career field and the constraints within which female controller assignments must be made, it is evident that the Palace Scope team provides effective management of controller assignments. The adoption of the Palace mode of personnel management resulted in significant improvements to the assignment management process and permitted more effective placement of personnel into positions compatible with their experience.

Additionally, it has been determined that some problems still exist and may continue unabated unless positive action is taken. These problems are not a result of inefficiency or ineffectiveness on the part of the Palace Scope team members, but are the result of the changes taking place in the structure of the career field. The major problem areas are the management of female controller assignments, the evolving CONUS to overseas ratio, the retention of controllers, and manning the AWACS system. One other problem noted, of

lesser importance, is that no list giving manning priority guidance for the various systems and commands worldwide is available.

### Recommendations

The first recommendation deals with assignment policies for female controllers. If the constraints which presently prohibit the assignment of women to AWACS crew duty and to many of the forward control locations in Korea and Europe are not changed to permit such assignments, the Weapons Director career field should be closed to women. Female accessions could be stopped immediately but the withdrawal of female controllers already in the system would have to be time phased to prevent the creation of an immediate shortage in the field. As mentioned in the previous discussion concerning utilization of female controllers, the prohibition of their assignment to AWACS/ABCCC and forward control locations places the male controller in a position of increased vulnerability for frequent assignment to the least desirable locations in the field. When one considers the programmed stability of the all-male AWACS controller pool and the number of forward controller positions from which women are excluded, the non-AWACS male controllers will be subject to more frequent PCS. The morale and retention problems posed by that situation could be staggering. However, on the other side of the argument, the perceived (and actual) loss of career progression opportunity represented by the

exclusion from some of the most important controller positions within the Air Force will certainly be a point of contention for female controllers. Based on the foregoing the Air Force could more forcefully argue the case for closure of the controller field to women than it could the case for knowingly limiting the career opportunity of female controllers to 56 percent of the positions in the specialty.

The second recommendation addresses the CONUS to overseas ratio problem. The projected ratio of 1.4:1 by 1983 poses a very real problem for resource managers. When one considers that approximately half of the total resource will be required to man three-fourths of the requirements, it is obvious that assignment instability, which had been so recently improved, will become a serious problem once more. There are at least two ways to counter this problem. First, a larger base of controllers could be established by further increasing accessions. Secondly, use of personnel with prior controller experience could be increased to offset this projected instability. If only the core of career controllers is used to meet projected reassignment needs, major command and higher staff level positions may be harder to fill with experienced people and career field retention would suffer.

Most of the problems discussed here involve issues which can lead to retention problems. Recommendations made earlier have included items which would help increase retention of

qualified people and need not be reiterated. The aim of any retention program, however, is to create conditions which are viewed favorably by the target audience. If we are to convince our young lieutenants that staying in the Air Force, and in the controller field in particular, is a viable option for them, the career opportunities for middle and upper level managers in the field must be made attractive. Great strides which have been made in enhancing the controller's image and job opportunities have made the field a relatively attractive one. The return of assignment instability indicated by the projected CONUS to overseas ratio and the restricted utilization of women in the field gravely threatens the attractiveness of the specialty and decreases the chances of retaining qualified, competent personnel.

Another recommendation is related to the problem of manning the AWACS program. There are a few possible actions which might alleviate the problem: (1) create an aeronautical rating for airborne controllers, (2) if an aeronautical rating system proves impractical, creation of a proficiency pay system for airborne controllers should be considered with pro-pay levels approximating flight pay standards, and (3) decentralization of AWACS operations in an effort to reduce temporary duty rotations to a minimum. Although the first two options are mutually exclusive, either one could and should be considered in conjunction with the third. If AWACS positions continue to be filled

strictly on a voluntary basis, difficulties in manning the system without some sort of compensation are most probable, especially with pay no greater than \$100 a month, and without a reduction of projected TDY deployments. AWACS training allocations have been met so far but only after TAC compromised its original experience level requirements by permitting grade level substitution, trained new accessions, and approved extensions for people within the system. Too much reliance on extensions could further threaten stability within the specialty and amplify projected retention problems. The U.S. AWACS buy is not yet completed and NATO AWACS will add 100 additional controller requirements. Obtaining volunteers in sufficient numbers and with sufficient experience to make AWACS a viable weapon system will be very difficult without incentives.

The final recommendation pertains to the lack of manning priority guidance available to the Palace Scope team. The Air Staff should designate, by system and/or command, priorities for manning the various control systems worldwide. At the present time there is no evidence that such guidance exists. The Palace Scope team is presently giving first priority to the AWACS program based upon testimony given to Congress by General Jones when he was the Air Force Chief of Staff. In that testimony General Jones stated that AWACS was the Air Force's number one operational priority. Following AWACS, the Palace

Scope team has decided to fill positions based on the following priorities in descending order: overseas operational, CONUS operational, overseas staff, and CONUS staff. (2) These self-designated priorities may or may not coincide with the Air Staff's views. Air Staff might want to put priorities on particular systems within any of the categories mentioned above, but no guidance has been given indicating those priorities. Majors and captains should not be forced to decide prioritization because this leaves very little to fall back on when an air division commander somewhere in the world feels that his system is not getting what it deserves. A priority listing, specified at the Air Staff level, would provide guidance to the Palace Scope team and lend authority to their assignment management actions.

In summary, the Palace Scope team is effectively managing the 17XX resource. However, the incumbents of the Palace Scope team and their successors face difficult problems in the near future if some tough decisions are not made soon at the Air Staff level. Many of the recommendations, if implemented, would require Congressional approval and involve increased spending; however, a lack of action to correct problems which are developing will lead to the loss of the significant gains made recently in the 17XX career field and will create severe resource management problems for the Air Force Manpower and Personnel Center.



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